

of the Government for utilisation of Rs.2.24 crores from out of the grants released under Non-lapsable Pool of Central Resources for the first phase of construction of an approachable new road to the University. The permission sought for has since been accorded.

Preference for private schools

3087. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that parents prefer private schools as compared to Government schools, for educating their children;

(b) if so, the reasons for such preference; and

(c) the details of steps being taken to make Government schools more attractive?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) NCERT has informed that no study has been conducted by NCERT to measure the fact that parents prefer private schools as compared to Government schools, for educating their children. However, rush for admission in selected public schools by a small percentage of parents is a common phenomena in urban and semi-urban areas. The reasons may be better facilities in the form of buildings and extra curricular activities alongwith flexibility regarding medium of instruction.

(c) As per para 5.7 of National Policy on Education 1986, there is a provision of essential facilities in primary schools, including at least 2 reasonably large rooms that are useable in all weathers, and the necessary toys, black boards, maps charts and other leaning material. At least 2 teachers, as far as possible, one of them a woman should work in every primary school, the number increasing as early as possible to one teacher per class. The said policy also provided for education for women's equality, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, backward sections and areas, minorities and handicapped, vocationalisation and pace-setting schools.

In accordance with the National Policy on Education 1986 (Modified in 1992) a large number of interventions/varied schemes like Operation Black Board, Teacher Education, Non-formal

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RAJYA SABHA

Education, Mahila Samakhya, Mid-Day Meal Scheme, District Primary Education Programme and the latest being Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which will prove a historic stride towards achieving the long cherished goal of UEE, have been introduced.

The various centrally sponsored enrichment schemes such as Educational Technology, Improvement of Science and Environmental Education, Value Education, National Population Education and Computer Literacy Programme have also been introduced. The Government has always taken care of the educational disadvantaged groups in rural areas. In this context Navodaya Vidyalayas have been established which are fully residential schools and provide good quality modern education, to all talented children in rural areas irrespective of socio-economic conditions. Education in Navodaya Vidyalayas, boarding and lodging, textbooks, uniforms etc. is free for all students.

State Governments have also taken several measures in this regard. These measures include free education upto elementary stage, free text books and uniform etc. for weaker sections etc.

Review of operation Black Board

3088. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the Centrally Sponsored Operation Black Board Scheme;

(b) if so, the various works undertaken through this scheme in each State during the last three years; and

(c) the allocation of funds made to different States and achievements, made thereunder since inception of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The scheme of Operation Blackboard was launched in 1987-88 to provide essential facilities in all primary schools (existing as on 30.9.1986) in the country such as two classrooms, two teachers and teaching learning equipment. The scheme has an in-built mechanism for continuous review through Quarterly Progress Reports. The above process is